

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 14, 2008. Claims 1 to 14 are in the application, with Claims 1, 10, and 14 being independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,121,542 (Shiotsuka). Claims 1 to 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shiotsuka. Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shiotsuka in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,291,763 (Nakamura). Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shiotsuka in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,611,884 (Bearinger). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 10, and 14 recite, *inter alia*, (i) a coating film provided on an area of the photovoltaic element plate on which the insulating member is not provided, in combination with (ii) a thickness of a part of the coating film which is in contact with the insulating member is smaller than the average thickness of the coating film.

None of Shiotsuka, Nakamura, and Bearinger, even in the proposed combinations, assuming, *arguendo*, that such could be combined, is seen to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed combination of features.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

If upon consideration of this Amendment, the Examiner still has concerns as to the patentability of the claims, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned representative to arrange an interview.

CONCLUSION

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional fees are required, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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